

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /010 W

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R 171250Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0598

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, USSAEC

SUBJ: SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORS

REF : STATE 58163

1. EMBOFF HAD GOOD CONVERSATION WITH NIBALI BEFORE RECEIPT OF REFTEL. CERTAINLY TEAM HAS NOT HAD A ROSY TIME IN RIYADH, LARGELY DUE TO ACCOMMODATIONS PROBLEMS. THE FACT THAT GREENWOOD HAD TO SPEND NEARLY A WEEK IN HOSPITAL WITH A KIDNEY INFECTION DID NOT HELP. SITUATION HAS IMPROVED NOW, HOWEVER, AND TEAM APPEARS TO BE DOING ITS JOB AND DOING IT WELL.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THE SSA'S PROBLEM IN HANDLING THIS RATHER UNIQUE SITUATION, BUT HAVE NOT CONSIDERED PAYMENT A MAJOR PROBLEM. THE BASIC FACTOR IS THAT THIS REQUEST AROSE PRIOR TO CREATION OF THE JOINT COMMISSION. THEREFORE WE CANNOT HANDLE IT EXACTLY AS WE'VE HANDLED PAYMENT FOR OTHER EXPERTS; PAYMENT MUST COME OUT OF SAUDI SOCIAL INSURANCE BUDGET. THIS STILL POSES NO REPEAT NO PROBLEM. DR. SOLAIM AND EMBOFF TALKED WITH ZAID OF SOCIAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION, AND LATTER STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT HE IS REPEAT IS PREPARED TO PAY FOR TEAM'S SERVICES. HE SAYS HE IS JUST WAITING FOR THE BILL.

3. ALTHOUGH ESTIMATES IN REFTELS MAY BE CONSIDERED BILLING, ZAID AND WE HAVE VIEWED THOSE FIGURES AS ESTIMATES, WITH A FINAL BILL TO FOLLOW. WE UNDERSTAND FROM NIBALI THAT THESE WERE STATEMENTS OF THE AMOUNT SSA IS CHARGING SAUDIS FOR

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SERVICES, AND THAT THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION OF ACTUAL CHARGES

EXCEEDING ESTIMATES - A SITUATION WHICH HAS EMBARRASSED US IN THE PAST.

4. WE SUGGEST THAT SSA FOLLOW BASICALLY THE SAME PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BY OTHER AGENCIES WHICH HAVE SENT TEAMS DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. THEY SHOULD SEND AN EXACT STATEMENT TO US AFTER RETURN OF THE TEAM TO THE U.S. WE WILL THEN TAKE THE STATEMENT TO ZAID FOR PAYMENT AND WILL FORWARD PAYMENT TO WASHINGTON. IF THIS CAUSES PROBLEMS TO SSA PER PARA 3 OF REFTTEL, THEN WE BELIEVE ZAID WILL BE WILLING TO SEND A CHECK PRIOR TO TEAM'S DEPARTURE. IN THAT CASE, HOWEVER, WE WOULD BE ASKING THE SAUDIS TO PAY A BILL WHICH HAS CERTAINLY BEEN CALCULATED ON THE HIGH SIDE, BEFORE COMPLETION OF THE TEAM'S MISSION. IN ANY CASE, SSA SHOULD SEND US A NEW, COMPLETE BILL.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: FORWARD A COMPLETE BILL GIVING FINAL COSTS FOR FULL TEAM. INDICATE WHETHER SSA IS WILLING TO WAIT FOR COMPLETION OF TEAM PROJECT BEFORE PAYMENT.

AKINS

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